







The Fryer, and the Boy.



LONDON

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THE HISTORY OF THE

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A Merry Iest : of the Frier & the Boy.



That God that dyed for vs all,
And spares both vinegar and gall,
bring vs out of bale :
And giue them both good life and long
Which listen doe vnto my song,
or tend vnto my tale.

If There dwelt a man in my Countie
Which in his life had wines three :
a blessing full of ioy :
By the first wife a sonne he had,
Which was a pretty sturdy lad,
a good unhappy boy.

His Father loued him well,
But his step-mother needed a dell,

I tell you as I thinke:

All things she thought lost by the Rood
Which to the boy did any good,
as either meat or drink,

And yet I wis it was but bad,
Not half enough thereof he had,
but encrease the world,

And with sorrowfull might she fare,
That did the little boy such care,
so fave, sooth as the durt.

Unto the man the wife gan say,
I would you'd put this boy away,
and that right sone in hast,

Truelph he is a cursed lad.

I would some other man him had
that would him better chace.

Then said the good-man dante not so
I will not let the yong boy go,
he is but tender of age,

He shall with me this yere abide,
till he be growne more strong and tride
for to winne better wage.

We haue a man a sturdy lout
which keepeth our neat the fields about
and sleepeth all the day,

He shall come home as god me shield,
And

of the Fryer and the Boy.

And the boy shall into the field,
to keepe them if he may.
Then said the wife in berement
Husband thereto I giue consent,
for that I thinke it meete:
On the mynute when it was payd
The litte boy went on his way
vnto the field with spade,
Of no man he toke any care,
But song beyho alway the mase,
much mirth he did peruse;
Forth he went with might and main,
Vntill he came vnto the plaine,
where he his dinner dynt to take;
But when he sawe it was so lare,
Full litte list thereto he had,
but put it by from sight,
Saying he had no list to tase,
But that his hunger still should last,
till he came home at night:
And as the boy sate on a hill,
There came an old man him vntill,
was walking by the way:
Sonne he said, God thee saluay,
Now welcome. Father may ye be
the litte boy gan say.
The old man said I hunger sore
Then hast thou any meate in store,
which

And A merry iest,
Which thou mightest giue to me:
The Childs replye, In God me lams,
No such good victuals as I haue,
Right welcome shall you be.
Of this the olde man was full glad,
He tooke vpon forth such as he had,
and bringes to gladly:
The olde man wille was to please,
He ate and made himselfe at ease,
saying, Some gramercy,
Because he said, th' all giuen meat to me,
And I will giue thee things to thee,
What ere thou wilt intreat:
Then said the boy tis best I stowe,
What you bestowe on me a Bowe,
with which I birds may get.
A Bowe my Sonne I will thee giue,
Such as shall last while thou doe liue,
And neuer Bowe more fit:
For if thou shalt therein all day,
Shaking or twinkling, or any way,
the mark thou still shalt hit.
Now when the Bowe in hand he felt,
And Arrows had vnder his belt,
hardly he laught & wits:
And said, had I a Pipe withall,
Though nere so little or so small,
I then had all my wish,

A Pipe

of the Frier & the Boy.

A Pipe wonne thou shalt haue also, 16
That in true mirth he so shall goe,

I put thee out of doubt,

As who that liues, and shall it heare,

Shall haue no power to forbeare,

but laugh and leape about.

Now tell me what the third shall be,

For these things I will giue to thee,

as I haue said before:

The Boy then smiling, answer made,

I haue enough for my pipe trade,

I will desire none more.

The olde man said my troth is plight,

Thou shalt haue all I the beight,

say on now let me see:

At home I haue (the Boy replide)

A cruell step-dame full of pride,

who is most cruell to me.

When meet my father giues to me,

She wishes payson it might be,

and kisseth in my face:

Now when she gazeth on me so

I would she should a rap let goe

which might ring through the place.

The olde man answered then anon,

When ere she looks thy face upon,

her teyle shall winde the horne:

So loudly, that who shall it heare,

shall

A merry iest

Shall not be able to forbear
but laugh her into scorn,

So farewell come the old man cryde,
God keep you sit the boy replide,

I take my leave of the:

God that best of all things may

Keep the safe both night and day,

gratuler some said he.

When it grew neare upon the night,

Jack well prepar'd his home full right

it was his ordinar,

And as he went his pipe did blow,

The whilst his cattle on a row

about him gan to dance.

Thus to the Tostone he pipt full trim,

His shipping beastes did follow him

into his fathers close:

He went and put them by each one,

Which done, he homeward went anon

to's fathers Hall he goes.

His father at his supper sat,

And little Jack espyde well that,

and said to him anon:

Father, all day I kept your Beate,

At night I pray you give me meat.

I me hungry by S. Iohn,

Beates I have lien all the day,

and kept your beastes, they did not stray.

my

of the Frier and the Boy.

my dinner was but ill:

His father took a Capons wing,

And at the boy he bid it sing,

brooding him eat his fill.

This grieved his stepdames hart full sore

Who loath'd the lad still more and more:

She scar'd him in the face:

With that she let goe such a blast,

As made the people all agast,

it sounded through the place.

Each one did laugh and make good game,

But the curst wife grew red for shame,

and wish't she had bene gone:

Pardy (the boy said) well I wot,

That Gun was both well charged & shot,

and might have broke a stone:

Full curstly she lookt on him then,

That lookt an other crack let goe

which did a thunder raise:

Quoth the boy did you ever see

A woman let her pellets flie

more thick and more at easie?

She said the boy unto his dame,

Temper thy tel-tale hum for shame,

which made her full of sorrow:

Dame said the good-man goe thy way,

For why I sweare by night nor day

thy gear is not to borrow.

A merry leſt,
Poſt afterward as you ſhall heare,
Unto the houſe there came a Frier,
and lay there all the night:
The wiſe this Frier lou'de as a Saint,
And to him made a great complaint,
of Iackes moſt vile deſpite.
We haue quoth ſhe within this,
A wicked Boy, none ſhewder is,
which doth me mighty care:
I dare not loke vpon his face,
O verely tell my ſhamefull caſe,
ſo ſithly I fare.
For Gods loue maſt the boy to morowe,
Beat him well and giue him ſorrowe,
and make him blinde or lame:
The Frier ſwore he would him beat,
The wiſe prayd him not to forget,
the Boy did her much ſhame.
Some Witch quoth ſhe he is I ſnell,
But quoth the Frier He beat him well,
of that take you no care:
He teach him wiſe craft if I may,
O quoth the wiſe doe ſo I pray,
lay on and doe not ſpare.
Early next morne the Boy aroſe
And to the ſtall full ſone he goes,
his Cattell ſo to dylue:
The Frier then by a ſealy gate,

of the Fryer & the Boy.

He was affraid to come to late,
he came full fast and blithe.
But when he came vpon the land,
He found where little Iacke did stand
keeping his beads alone:
Now Boy he said God giue thee shame
What hast thou done to thy Stepdams
tell me forthwith anon.

And if thou canst not quit the well,
Ile beat thee till thy booye swell,

I will no longer bide:

The Boy reply'd what wylest thou?

My Stepdams is as well as ye,

what need you thus to chide?

Come will you see mine arrowe flye,

And hit your small bird in the eye

and other things withall?

Sir Fryer though I haue little wit,

Yet yonder Bird I meane to hit

and giue her you I shall.

There sate a small Bird on a bryer,

Whoo! shoot you sayg then said the Fryer

so; that I long to see:

Iacke hit the Bird vpon the head,

So right, that she fell downe for dead,

no further could she flye.

Fall to the bird the Fryer thought,

And by the Bird in hand he went,

much

A merry iest

much wandring at the chance :
Meane while Jack took his pipe & plaid
So loud the Frier grew mad afraid,
and fell to skip and dance.
So sower was the pipes sound heard
But Medlam-like he bonnist and fard,
and leapt the bush about :
The sharpe byters scratcht him by the face,
And by the byech, and other place,
that fast the blood ran out.
It tare his cloathes downe to the skirt,
His cope, his cote, and linnen shirt,
and euery other wade: (thick
The thornes this while were rough and
And did his prync members prick,
that fast they gan to blade.
Jack as he piped laught among,
The Frier with byters was vildly sung,
he hopped wandzous bye :
At last the Frier held by his hand,
And said I can no longer stand,
of I shall dauncing dye.
Gentle Jacke thy Pipe holde still,
And heere I vow for good noz ill
to doe thee any woe :
Jacke laughing to him thus replide,
Frier Slip out on the other side,
thou hast frs leane to goe.

of the Fryer & the Boy.

Out of the bath the Fryer then went,
All martyrd, ragged, scratcht and rent,
and to one on every side;
Hardly on him was left a clout,
So to wrap his belly round about,
his harlotry to hide.
The thornes had scratcht him by the face,
On hands, on thighes, and every place,
he was all bath'd in blood;
So much, that who the Fryer did see,
For feare of him, were faine to flee,
thinking he had bene a god.
When to the good wife home he came,
He made no bragges for very shame
to see his cloathes rent all;
Much sorowe in his heart he had,
And every man did see him mad
when he was in the Hall.
The goodwife said where hast thou bene?
Sure in some euill place I wene,
by sight of thine array:
Dame (said he) I came from thy Sonne,
The Deuill and he hath me bound,
no man him conquer may;
With that, the Goodman he came in,
The wife set on her madding pin;
cride, heer's a foule array:
Thy Sonne that is thy life and dere,
Hath

A merry iest,
Hath almost slaine the holy Frier,
alas and well away.
The good man said benedicti,
What hath the wilde boy done to thee,
now tell me without let.
The deuill him take the Frier then said,
He made insuance despite my head,
among the Thornes, the hey go bot.
The good man said vnto him tho,
Father, hadst thou bene murdered so,
it had bene deadly sinne:
The Frier to him made this reply,
The Pipe did sound so merrily
that I could neuer bin.
Now when it grew to almost night,
Iacke the Boy came home full right,
as he was wont to do:
But when he came into the Hall,
Full soone his Father did him call,
and bad him come him to.
Boy he said, come tell me here,
What hast thou done vnto this Friers
Ipe not in any thing.
Father he said, now by my birth,
I playd him but a fit of mirth,
and pipte him by a spring.
What Pipe said's Father would I heare
Now God forbid eride out the Frier,
his

of the Frier and the Boy.

his handes he then did bring :

You shall (the boy said) by Gods grace,
The Frier replide woe, and alas,
making his sorrowes ring.

For Gods love said the wretched Frier,
And if you will that strange Pipe heare,
binde me fast to a post :

For fate my fortune thus I read,
If dance I doe I am but dead,
my wofull life is lost.

Strong ropes they take both sharpe and round
And to the post the Frier they bound
in the middle of the hall :

All they which at the Table sat,
Laughed and made good sport thereat,
saying Frier thou canst not fall.

Then said the goodman to the boy,
Jack pipe me vp some merry toy,
pipe freely when thou wilt :

Father, the boy said herily,
You shall haue mirth enough and glory
till you bid me be still.

With that his pipe he quickly hent,
And pipte, the whilst in berament,
each Creature gan to dance :

Lightly they skippt and leapt about,
Perking their legs now in, now out,
Arising aloft to pzanee.

The good man as in sad dispaire
 Leapt out, and through, & oze his chaire,
 no man could caper hier:
 Some others leapt quite oze the stocks
 Some start at straws and sell oze blocks
 Some wallowed in the fier.
 The good man made himselfe good sport
 To see them dance in this mad sort,
 the good wife sate not still:
 But as shee danc't she look't on Jack,
 And fast her taile did double each crack,
 loud as a water mill.
 The Frier this while was almost lost,
 He knockt his pate against the post,
 'twas then his dancing grace:
 The rope rubb'd him vnder the chinne,
 That the blood ran from his tattered skin,
 in many a naked place.
 Jack piping ran into the street,
 They followed him with nimble fete,
 hauing no power to stay:
 And in their haile the dore did cracke,
 Each tumbling ouer his fellowes back
 bnmindfull of their way.
 The neighbours that were dwelling by,
 Hearing the pipe so merily,
 came dancing to the gate:
 Some leapt oze dore, some oze the hatch

of the Fryer & Boy.

No man would stay to draw the latch,
but thought he came too late.

Some sick or sleeping in their bed,
As they by chance lift up their head,
were with the pipe awaked: (4 locks
straight forth they start through dores
Some in the ir shirts som in their smocks
and some skarke belly naked.

When all were gathered round about,
There was a bilde unruly rout
that danced in the street:

Of which some lame that could not goe
Striving to leape did tumble so,
they danced on hands and feet.

Jack tyred with sport said now I rest,
Doe (quoth his Father) I holde it best,
thou cloyst me with this cheere:

I pray thee boy now quiet sit,
In faith this was the merriest sit
I heard this seauen years.

All those that dancing thither came
Laught heartily and made good game,
yet some got many a fall:

Thou cursed boy cryd out the Fryer,
Here I doe summon thee to appeare
before the Iudiciall:

Take thou be there on Friday next,
He mete thee then though now perplext,

A merry iest,
for to ordaine thy sorrow:
The boy replied, I make a vow,
For yet he appeare as soon as thou,
if Friday were to morrow.
But Friday came as you shall heare,
Jackes step-dame and the dancing Frier
together they were met:
And other people a great pace,
Flocked to the Court to heare each case,
the Officiall was set.
Much ciuill matters were to doe,
More Libels read then one or two,
both against Priest and Clarke:
Some there had testaments to proue,
Some women there through wanton lous
which got strokes in the darke.
Each Doctor there did plead his case
When forth did step Frier Topias,
and Jackes step-dame also:
Sir Officiall aloud said he,
I haue brought a wicked boy to thee
hath done me mightie woe:
He is a Witch as I doe feare,
In Orleance he can finde no peare,
this of my troth I know.
He is a Denill (quoth the wife)
And almost hath bereau'd my life
at that, her taile did blowe,

of the Frier & the Boy.

So lowd, th' assembly laught thereat,
And said her pistols cracke was flat,
the charge was all amisse:

Dame (qd. the gentle Officiall)
Proceed and tell me forth thy tale,
an doe not let for this.

The wife that feard another cracke,
Stood mute, and nere a word she spake,
shame put her in such dread:

Ha (said the Frier) right angerly,
Inaue this is all still long of thee,
now enill maist thou speed.

The Frier said, sir Officiall,
This wicked boy will bere vs all,
vnlesse you doe him chaste:

Sir, he hath pet a pipe, truly,
Will make you dance and leape full hie,
and breake your heart at last,

The Officiall replide perdic,
Such a pipe I faine would see,
and what mirth it can make:

Now God forbid replide the Fryer,
That ere we should that vilde pipe heare
ere I my way hence take.

Pipe on Jacke (said the Officiall)
And let me heare thy cunning all.

Jacke blew his pipe full lowd,
That euery man start vp and danceth,

A merry iest,

Proctors & Priests, and Somners prance
and all in that great crowd,

Ouer the deske the Officiall ran,

And hopt vpon the Table, that

straight iumpt vnto the floze:

The Frier that danst as fast as he

Met him mid way, and dangerously

broke eithers face full soze.

The Register leapt from his pen,

And hopt into the throng of men,

his Inke-horne in his hand:

Which swinging round about his head,

some he strucke blinde, some almost dead,

some they could hardly stand.

The Proctors flung their Willes about:

The good-wiues taile gave many a shont,

personing all the mirth:

The Somners as they had bene wood

capt oze the formes and seates a god,

and wallowed on the earth.

Benches that soe their Demnance came,

and other meeds of wooldy shame,

danst every one as fast:

each set vpon a merry pin,

some broke their heads, & some their shin

and some their noses brast.

he officiall thus soze turmoild,

alse swelt with sweat & almost spoild,

of the Fryer & the Boy.

cride to the wanton childe,
To pipe no moze within that place,
But stay the sound euen for Gods grace,
and loue of Marie milde.
Jacke said, As you will it shall be,
Prouided I may hence goe free,
and no man doe me wrong.
Neither this woman nor this Fryer,
Nor any other creature here,
he answered him anon:
Jack, I to thee my promise plight,
In thy defence I meane to fight,
and will oppose thy foe.
Jack ceast his pipe then all still stood,
Some laughing hard, some raging word,
so parted at that tide:
The Officiall and the Sommer,
The Step dame, and the wicked Fryer,
with much ioy, mirth, and pride.

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